School Craft in Memories of Three Generations

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Throughout Finnish elementary school 150-year-history, school craft has served the teaching needs of societal, educational, new craft techniques, tools and materials in every school. This article studies memories associated with school craft throughout three consecutive generations. The focus is particularly on what kind of memories associated with school craft the representatives of different generations have, and how they are related. Five families, with representatives from three different generations (15 persons in total), were interviewed in group-interviews in 2014. The interviews took place as an encountering act of recollection between different generations where the circumstances of teaching handicraft, pupils and teachers as well as handicraft products and the process behind them were evaluated and interpreted in a group. The persons interviewed for this research mainly represent the industrialized era when the focus of craft teaching at school shifted into untraditional skills needed in the industry and hobbies. Two themes stood especially out from the data analysis: products manufactured in school craft and positive and negative memories associated with handicraft. There were not that much conversation regarding the materials or techniques used in manufacturing handicraft products. Although the oldest memories were associated with the lack of materials.

Keywords: school craft, memory, comprehensive school, elementary school, handicraft

Introduction

Finland was the first country in the world that included handicraft in subjects that were taught in elementary school. Throughout its entire 150-year-history, handicraft at school has served the teaching needs of societal, educational, new craft techniques, tools and materials in every school. This has led to the development of subject, school craft, into flexibly meeting the required know-how -skills in both work- and everyday life. (Marjanen, 2012.) This article studies memories associated with school craft throughout three consecutive generations. To be able to understand the ways different generations give meanings to things, one must take into consideration the differences between generations in experiencing the world around them in addition to the historical time period and context of action (Giele & Elder, 1998).

One focal mission of memory knowledge research is to expand one's interpretations of past. In this article, participants' school memories are reconstructed via memory knowledge. The importance of microhistory is emphasised due to its potential in making concreteness visible from history. (Fingerroos & Haanpää 2006, pp. 27–31.) There are many factors that impact one's ability to recall past events and willingness to share them: recollection situation, persons participating in a recollection situation, and a course of life of a recaller (Kokko 2007, p. 39). Remembrance is an active function and memory images change during life. Memories depend on situations and same things can be recalled and shared differently in different situations and to different people. Above all, this article describes subjective significance of the memories attached to school craft as a school subject in people's lives (comp. Portelli, 2006, p. 55). The basis of conclusions is the subjective parse that people give to their own experiences (Kalela 2006, p. 83). One's personal subjective memory associated with school craft might differ from the aim of the curriculum at a given time.

School craft as a subject in elementary and comprehensive school

Craft became a school subject in general education, 150 years ago, in 1866. Right from the beginning, the goal of the subject was to educate children for work through work, teach handiness and everyday life skills as well as to prevent indolence (Cygnaeus, 1910). Teaching had both educational and practical aims (Figure 1). School craft was divided into girls' handicraft and boys' handicraft (Figure 2), which was a consequence of the typical dichotomy between men and women in the division of labour at the time (Lindfors, Marjanen & Jaatinen, 2016).

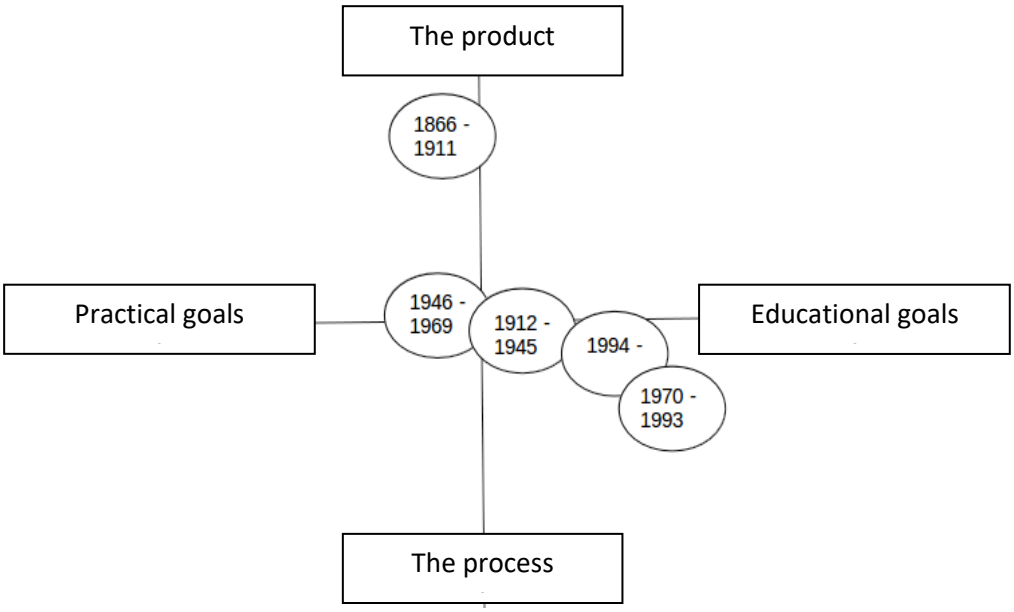

Figure 1. The change of the signification of the product and its educational and practical goals in school craft (reworked after Marjanen 2012, p. 225).

There are many factors explaining the changes that took place in the history of school craft. Pivotal reasons for change were societal – especially changes in the work field and reforming qualification standards. Other reasons were: the change of the educational aspect of thinking, technical aspects of handicrafts, reformations in tools and materials, changes in the demand for hand made products and the requirements of equality education. (Marjanen 2012, p. 197.)

There were many curricula during the school history of the persons who were interviewed for this research. Two of the oldest participants (born in 1930's) started their school when the curriculum for the rural school, which came into effect in 1925, guided teaching. In the country side people needed craftsmanship, so the reformation focused on agrarian subjects. In the curriculum of rural school, central goals were economical values, thriftiness and benefit factors. Behind practicality there were educational, societal and economical premises. (Committee report, 1925, p.14; Lahdes 1961, p.58.) Besides all the things mentioned above, it was school's mission to provide education based on Christian ethics and enthuse children to practise their knowledge and skills (Lahdes 1966, pp. 153–160). The aim of teaching craft was to teach pupils versatile handiness, which is why multifaceted hand exercises using different handicraft techniques were emphasised in the teaching content. Handicraft products in textbooks representing that era mainly embodied, excluding a doll and its accessory, common utensils (Marjanen 2012, pp. 132–136.) The toolkits boys had in use contained woodwork and a compendious material for

metalwork. The focus point of making products was in common household utensils such as furniture, tools used in farming fields and blacksmith's and shoemaker's tools. (Metsärinne & Marjanen, 2016.)

In the curricula, that came into effect after the Second World War (1946 and 1952), the emphasis was on societal and educational goals. Ideals of the era that reflected the aims of elementary school were such as independency, diligence, wisdom and democracy. Social and individual education in the spirit were emphasised in elementary school (Koskenniemi, 1944). Industrialising society needed workforce and thus the required competence in the industry was especially emphasised in boys' handicraft. School craft in school focused on practising skills needed in everyday life. According to the actual curriculum (1946-1969), essential handicraft techniques for girls were sewing, crocheting, knitting and sewing with a sewing machine, but the curriculum also said that drawing a sketch, material technology patching, darning, and embroidery were in the curriculum. (Committee report 1952:3, pp.179–183.) Boys were taught cardboard- and metal work besides woodwork, and also mechanical engineering and electrical engineering became part of teaching (Metsärinne & Marjanen, 2016). These aims impacted the participants in this research who were born in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's.

There were not any significant changes to the aims and content of school craft until the arrival of comprehensive school in the 1970's. This reformation affected pupils who went to school in the 1960-70's, from whose environments all professional and semi-professional craftsmen disappeared. In the curriculum of comprehensive school (Committee report, 1970), new concepts were introduced: pupils would study both textile work and technical work according to their choices. At the same time, it was an aim to dismiss the previously dominated strong product orientation (Figure 2) that emphasised the meaning of the handicraft product planned to manufacture. The subjects embodying school craft were named as textile work and technical work. Until that point, the common thought was that girls studied girls' handicraft and boys' handicraft for boys. In practise, the division between girls and boys remained pretty unchanged: girls primarily studied in textile work's learning environment and boys in the learning environment specialised for technical work (Lindfors, 2012). However, the importance of product design conducted by pupils became more important and it became the goal of teaching to inspire pupils to participate in designing and evaluating products. In the curriculum that came into effect after the arrival of comprehensive school in 1985 (NCCBE, 1985) the aims of school craft and handicraft techniques became more and more technology and information based. The participants in this research who were born in 1960's, 1970's and 1980's studied according to the Committee report 1970 and National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 1985 (NCCBE 1985).

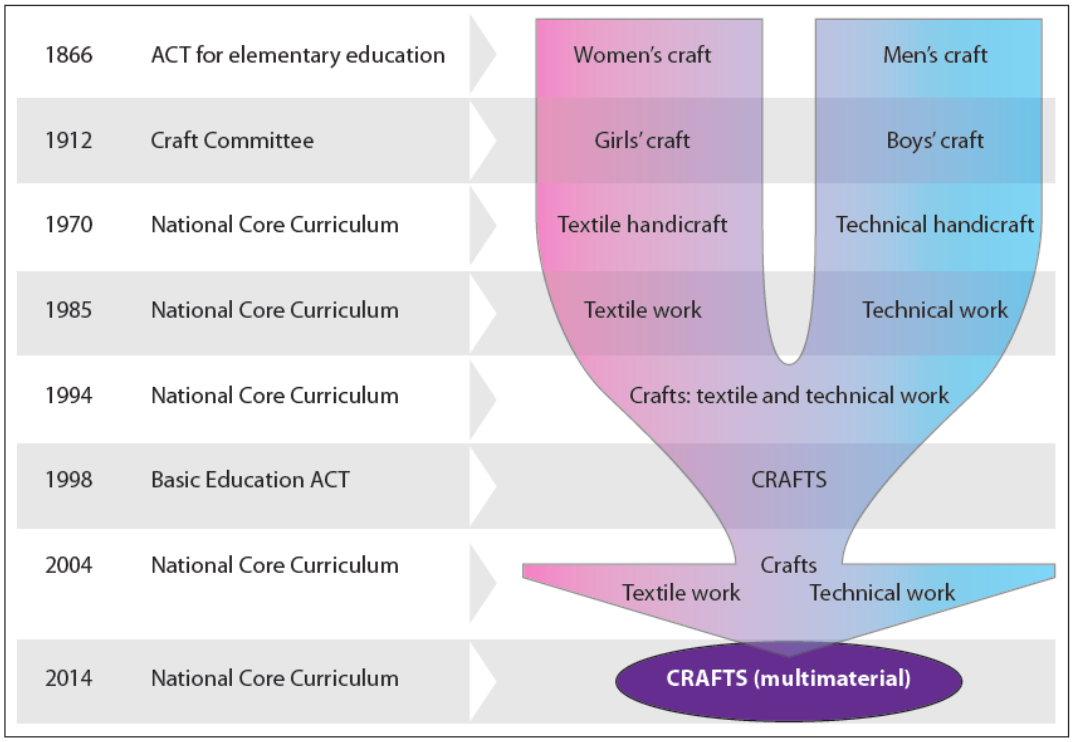

Figure 2. The change in school craft between 1866-2014 (Lindfors 2015, p. 251).

A significant change in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education of 1994 was that the goals of teaching were descriptive and no set limits were assigned to teaching hours. Therefore, it is difficult to make assumptions about the content and aims of teaching handicraft in that time period. (Metsärinne & Marjanen, 2016.) In the Basic Education Act (1998/628) in 1998, school craft was described as one holistic subject instead of two subjects: textile work and technical work. In the premise of the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004, school craft was structured into two explicit content areas: textile work and technical work. For the first four school years all pupils, boys and girls, studied school craft together. After this, pupils had the opportunity to choose to which content area they wanted to focus their studies. The curriculum did not anymore mention products that pupils were expected to manufacture. A holistic craft process, from designing and manufacturing a product all the way up to evaluation, conducted by a pupil gained more importance. The participants in this research who were born in 1990's and beginning of 21st century studied according to the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 1994 and 2004.

The current National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (NCCBE, 2014) clearly states that the basis for teaching is no longer about learning how to work with a specific technique or material, but rather a pupil's need to solve problems that arise from their built-in living environment. In order to solve a particular problem and to find a solution to a challenge, pupils need to familiarise themselves with various materials and techniques. The newest curriculum emphasises pupil's craft process and innovative working as a whole. According to the Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014, the purpose of teaching is to get pupils acquainted generally with different handicraft materials and -techniques and teach how to notice things that need developing in the built-in environment. This requires a multi material approach to both textile and technical work (Lepistö & Lindfors, 2015).

The significant change in the curricula has happened in both manufacturing techniques and tools as well as in manufacturing materials. However, it is easy to discern the reformation of educational concepts within each era from the aims of school craft. The role of the products manufactured in schools and the meaning of educational and practical goals have clearly varied (figure 1). Above all, the need for change the handicraft products manufactured in schools is visible in school craft. The goal is no longer a copied and partial handicraft product that aims for practical use. The aim of craft has rather shifted more towards teaching creative thinking and the product has a minor role while the importance of the process has increased. There has been a shift from a product into a process that teaches individuals some important skills needed in everyday life – as well as self-expression and creative problem solving skills (NCCBE, 2004; 2014). The aims for school craft seem to be tailored even nowadays to fit the reforming needs of the society.

Research design and school craft memory research

This article focuses on the memory knowledge associated with the craft subject in school history from 1940's till 2010's. The main research question is: what kind of memories associated with school craft the representatives of different generations have and to what these are attached to. The sub-questions are: what products were made at school, what techniques were used at school craft and what were the most unpleasant or unpleasant craft memories?

Memory knowledge is interpreted as recalling and recollection talk that refers to retrieving handicraft associated school memories and structuring events that have happened in the past. Interviews are a typical way of conducting memory knowledge research (oral history). Memory knowledge research has been used to bring up new ways of collecting data in addition to written source material. (Kalela, 1999; Ukkonen, 2000; Fingerroos & Peltonen, 2006.)

The research looks at school craft associated memories through three consecutive generations (Figure 1). For this research five families, with representatives from three different generations, were interviewed in group-interviews in 2014. The interviews took place as an encountering act of recollection between different generations where the circumstances of teaching handicraft, pupils and teachers as well as handicraft products and the process behind them were evaluated and interpreted in a group. 15 persons in total were interviewed. From four families, a mother, daughter and granddaughter took part in the interview. From one family a father, son and grandson were interviewed.

In order to understand how different generations give meanings to things, the different structures of experience and the historical context and time where they have acted need to be taken into consideration (Giele & Elder, 1998). Memories and memory knowledge are built around a cultural context, when one's memory knowledge becomes part of a collective memory. A remembrance is often experienced as personal, but for example family, close environment or government can affect its formation. (Halbwachs 1950, pp. 52–53; Abrams 2010, pp. 95–96.) In two of the interviews, the oldest interviewees were born in 1930's and some of their years in elementary school were during the Winter War and Continuation War. The youngest interviewee was born in 2002 and started the sixth grade at the time of the interview. The participants were from different areas in Finland: South-West, Satakunta, Ostrobothnia, Pirkanmaa and North Karelia. The participants were chosen for the research interview based on the criteria that there were at least three consecutive generations in the family. It was also important that at least two members of the family practised handicraft or some activity that requires handicraft skills, for example renovating and repairing.

The interviews (I) were given ordinal numbers 1 – 5. Each interviewee was also given a number based on their generation I – III. The oldest participant in the first interview was registered as I-1/I, the middle one I-1/II and the youngest one I-1/III. The next Table 1 presents each participant's born in year and their place in the sequence of generations.

Table 1. The symbols of each participant and their birth year.

Interview	First generation	Second generation	Third generation
I1	I1/I b.1931	I1/II b.1964	I1/III b.2000
I2	I2/I b.1955	I2/II b.1978	I2/III b.2000
I3	I3/I b.1935	I3/II b.1963	I3/III b.1993
I4	I4/I b.1953	I4/II b.1979	I4/III b.2000
I5	I5/I b.1954	I5/II b.1973	I5/III b.2002

As Ukkonen states (2000, p. 11) the act of recollection is about recalling events from the past but also interpreting them. At the same time recalling is also about restructuring information. In this data, the relationship between participants and their experiences regarding school craft, and also the relationship they have with their ability to work with their hands were observed. According to Rautakilpi (2008) memories and the act of recollection are about describing atmospheres and impressions. They are also about rebuilding and restructuring common past. In the recalled data, different levels of memories can intermingle, and a researcher does his/her interpretation from the participant's own interpretation of his/her life. One's own beliefs about what is worth recalling and sharing forward affect the act of recollection.

According to Portell (2006, p. 61) an interview is a result of the interviewer's and interviewee's collaboration. It is important that the interviewer accepts the interviewee and prioritises what the interviewee wants to share instead of hearing only what he/she wants to hear. In this research, the aim was to give participants space to share their own experiences, which is why interviews differ in both length and question layout even though all the common themes were kept coherent all the way through collecting data. The recorded interviews were transcribed word by word. There were 88 A4 pages of a transcribed text altogether.

Interview associated transcription and transcription analysis are also about doing reinterpretations and compromises regarding the data. It is the role of the researcher to interpret why interviewees find some specific things important in their lives and also observe what about these events is written about and how they are described (Vehkalahti & Suurpää 2014, p. 18). The source material in this research was read in a theory guided way with a focus on picking up relevant information regarding the research questions (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, pp. 117–118). While analysing the data, we tried to build a structure for different generations that was associated with time difference between experiences.

The data was categorised using the thematic content analysis. The themes were formed on the basis of research questions. According to Fingerroos and Peltonen (2006, p. 9), it is researcher's mission to bring up interviewees' perspectives of their past, present a description of the past and interpret it. The analysis

that directs memory knowledge is challenging for researchers from the perspective of source criticism (Kalela 2000, p.98), and researcher needs to be able to read sources from a different informative perspective. In this article the focus was on themes: what kind of memories the participants had for school craft, what kinds of crafts they manufactured at school, what kinds of techniques they used with materials and what was nice and not so nice during school craft lessons. The material was also classified according to these questions. The products and used techniques were classified according to generations and compared to existing curricula.

In order to conduct the analysis, it was crucial to understand what terms interviewees used to describe the school craft due to the fact that the name of the subject has changed over and over due to reformations of the curriculum (Figure 2). The interviewees used the word handicraft to describe both textile and technical work, including subject school craft. On the other hand, they also meant handicraft as just textile work. Textile (hand)work and technical (hand)work as content areas of school craft have transferred into all participants' speech even though they have only been used as the name of the subject from the 1970's – and even though the term woodwork was used when talking about technical work. No one of the participants born in 1930's and 1950's mentioned girls' handicraft or boys' handicraft (comp. Figure 2). Everyone used the terms textile work and technical work when it was necessary to differentiate content areas of school craft. On the other hand, all the participants mentioned woodwork separately. Technical work was also almost always named as woodwork despite the fact that it has included metal- and electronical work for instance. Also, the youngest participants segregated woodwork from handicraft even though the name of the subject has been school craft during their entire school career. Collanus, Guttorm, Jokela ja Kärnä-Behm (2006, p. 151) have mentioned that the terms used to describe technical work often refer to more technological terms among students whereas the terms used to describe textile work refer more to a product that is manufactured with hands.

Memory knowledge associated with handicraft – the results of the research

The analysis revealed two themes from the data: the products manufactured at school and the positive and negative memories associated with school craft.

The products and techniques in school crafts

In the beginning of the interview participants were asked about the products they manufactured during their school years. The purpose of the question was to set up the interview and stimulate recollection while keeping in mind that products made at school craft play an essential role in motivating pupils. If pupils can have a say in the product they are making, one way or another, it increases their motivation in the craft process (Autio, Hietanoro & Ruismäki, 2011). All the participants were not able to immediately recall even a couple of the products they made at school. While other participants in the group interview shared their experiences, it helped others recall them too.

Table 2. The product memories of three generations. The products that were manufactured during several curricula are presented in bold letters.

	I generation 1931–1955	II generation 1963–1979	III generation 1993–2002
Products	**1940 decade** **socks**, **knitted mittens**, a tablecloth, a cloth, a ball made out of woollen thread, a bib, a pen's dryer, a doll for a pupil in a lower class, a pillow case a potholder **1960 decade** chopping board, crochet potholder, embroidered pillow case, tablecloth, crochet hat for a baby, blouse or skirt, and bag	**1970 decade** a potholder, a tablecloth made of waffle cloth, cotton lace, sauna cloth, a towel, a pillow made with a sewing machine, a pillow case, an apron, velvet jeans, a jersey, a shawl, stitch cloth badge, **knitted mittens**, **socks**, a blouse, a college hoodie, curtains, scarf, a woollen hat, a hand towel **1980 decade** coat rack, an electronic egg timer, **a scoop for sauna**, an appliqued and imprinted pillow case, college pants, a towel, a crochet table cloth, a knit for a baby, a square dress, a pin pillow, a neon yellow tracksuit, **socks,** a jumper, a wooden man, tent stitch sewed belt, a cross-stitch dog, tent stitch bag, a tablecloth made of waffle	**2000 decade** a knitted and crocheted troll, pillow, bag or pencil case, bag, **woollen socks**, **knitted mittens**, a hoodie, a bed for Barbie, **a scoop for sauna**, a sausage stick, a metallic beetle **2010 decade** an electronic box, **a scoop for sauna**, a hoodie, shorts, a poppana (Finnish table runner), a crocheted turtle, a printed picture, a bag, a thermometer, an electronic slalom track, a pot coaster, a container, a sock puppet, a spinning top, **knitted mittens,** a pin pillow, a clock, a woollen hat, a knitted tube scarf, a blouse, a hobby horse, a crafted painting, a crocheted bag, a pillow made of waffle cloth

Interviewees mentioned multiple products they made in school craft. The memories of the oldest generation, born in the 1930's, included mostly products for everyday life such as socks, knitted mittens and a tablecloth. It is good to notice that first generation interview age group varied a lot. Product memories of school craft twenty years later were different. The memories of the generation born in the 1950's included products such as chopping board, crochet potholder, embroidered pillow case, tablecloth and crochet hat for a baby.

> We did it so that we put corks together and then first tied them together with a string... and then those corks were cut a bit so that they would become rounder… then we curled strong thread around it evenly… then we started to put wool thread around it… it turned into a ball. (I-1/I)

Participants born in the 1960's and 1970's represented the middle generation in this research. Handicraft memories of the participants born in the 60's differed greatly from the former generation. Firstly, the number of recalled items was remarkably abundant. Remarkable was that participants born in 1960's mentioned plenty of and different kinds of products. Variety of the products included products such as

a potholder, a tablecloth made of waffle cloth, a pillow made with a sewing machine, a pillow case, a shawl, stitch cloth badge, a college hoodie, curtains, scarf, a woolly hat and a hand towel. This large variety of products continued for the next decade. The participants born in the 1970's recalled handicraft products such as a coat rack, an electronic egg timer, a square dress, a pin pillow, a neon yellow tracksuit, tent stitch sewed belt, a cross-stitch dog, tent stitch bag, and a tablecloth made of waffle cloth.

> Well, umm when we knitted, it became so much too big for my head that it fell to my shoulders… it was loose knitting, too many crochets, so the teacher decided then so that they made it smaller with zigzag and then cut some of it off so that it became my hat. But basically, we knitted and crocheted just like them, but we never had woodwork for example, we never got to do woodwork. (I-1/II)

The memories the youngest generation had about handicrafts were more multi material due to the expansion of the syllabus in school craft (figure 2), so every pupil has studied both textile and technical work – at least to some extent. Only one of the participants was born in 1990's. The younger generation's school craft memories were still quite versatile and they mentioned having remarkably many possibilities in making decisions which all, especially the oldest generation, did not have with their school craft. Products they manufactured at school were such as a knitted and crocheted troll, an optional sewing work: pillow, bag or pencil case and an optional knitted work: pillow, bag, woollen socks and knitted mittens. Freedom to choice what to do was mentioned couple of times.

Four of the participants were born in the beginning of 21st century. At the time research interviews took place, they were either in 6th grade or lower secondary school. The handicraft products they mentioned were often either very congenial or arduous. The handicraft products interviewees mentioned were such as an electronic box, poppana (type of Finnish/Karelian loom woven fabric, can be used as a thick fabric, in schools like a table runner or a place mat), a crocheted turtle, a thermometer, an electronic slalom track, a pot coaster, a container, a sock puppet, a spinning top, a knitted tube scarf, a blouse, a hobby horse, a crafted painting and a pillow made of waffle cloth.

> ...last year or I mean in 5th grade we did, umm... we knitted tube scarfs and started making a blouse and we also did hobby horses from wood and plank… then all kinds of small things, wet felting, … and then in technical work we did a scoop for throwing water on the sauna stove. (I-5/III)

The products with either a very positive or negative memory seemed to be remembered the best – especially among the oldest participants. Some of the products made at school were still in use. These products, which had lasted through use, were different kinds of hanging on the wall and cloths. The middle generation was able to recall the most products they made at school. This derives partly from the fact that it has not been as long since they were in school as it is for the oldest generation. The products the parents and grandparents remembered from their children's school years differed from the products they made themselves at school – for example electronical products. They represented, compared to their school years, more technologically challenging products.

> ...egg timer, the electronic egg timer that we still have, functions. I thought it was pretty marvelous at that time. I mean I-2/II has done it. It had that electrical circuit there inside it. (I-2/1)

Interviewees paid also attention to the fact that the products manufactured at school these days seem to be smaller and quicker to make than in the past. The biggest reason behind the change may be the big reformations to the amount of contents taught school craft lessons between the first and third generation. The youngest interviewees had participated in the craft teaching with textile and technical work for at least during their first four school years and therefore had experience on both school craft content areas.

> Somehow a lot smaller, the products are much smaller. Not like then when I was in school when we set goals for that product that we were making. Like for example in the blouse had buttonholes, plus the collars, so you learned how to do the collars. They don't have that anymore. (I-4/II)

The youngest interviewees had not yet finished their comprehensive school. That is why they had not made as many products as the older interviewee generations.

Positive and negative handicraft memories

The memories associated with school craft as a school subject differentiated from another. The majority of the interviewees brought up that it was a pleasant subject. Also, according to the latest evaluation of learning outcomes in comprehensive school, school craft was associated with strong emotions. Two thirds of the pupils liked craft subject while one third had a negative approach towards it (Hilmola, 2011).

The pleasantness of handicraft builds from handicraft know-how, learning new things and the positive emotions during the craft process. A part of it is also about finishing the products and the emotions and mental images it stimulates. (Heikkinen, 1997.) According to Lindfors and Hilmola (2016) pupils, especially some of the boys, have a positive approach towards school craft even when their learning outcomes are weak. This might be associated with pupils' experience of the pleasantness of working and experiential learning.

> Well yeah, I waited them (crafts lessons) more than something else, like a theoretical subject or… it was right after Physical Education the next funniest subject.(I-2/II)

Based on the research material the school craft memories focused on products. Probably these were easier to remember but also research theme, what was made at school, guide to answer more product than technique oriented. In this research material there was no straight question about techniques but this theme was discussed when interviewees pondered the answer to the question, did you get advised during craft lessons. From this research material point of view no common line in techniques or methods was detected. Neither no common products that participants mentioned as the most pleasant were not found. However, the common factor seemed to be that mentioned products had been in the use of participants or their families. A sewed bag had been used as a school bag, curtains had been in use in one's own room, sewed clothes had been used and a scoop for throwing water on the sauna stove is still in use. The products that needed a lot of work or turned out very well or badly were also well remembered.

> And then we did those dresses, the kind of square dress. We had to buy fabrics for it ourselves, the kind… the kind, straps and it also had those seam turns, that it was the thing, that we had to learn to do like the kind of seam turns and in-sewing and buttonholes that it took me an entire line of buttons to make that dress… I often wore a crocheted lace blouse over it. It was really nice, I liked to wear it. Yeah, that has stayed in my mind. (I-4/II)

Besides use, the most pleasant work could be the product one had an opportunity to decide and give a say at.

> ...I think it was in Lower Secondary... the kind of locker, a lockable locker. Shaped like a coffer, but it was standing up. When you could choose yourself what you did, it was probably it… it was next to the door, when I still lived at home… I don't know, it was probably the kind that I was pretty proud of … you were able to manufacture one product as you wished. It was probably that one that was the most pleasant to me. (I-2/II)

Using new machines seemed to bring pleasure. Receiving electrical sewing machine remained as a pleasant experience in a pupil's mind. An electrical sewing machine arrived in a school at the time a participant born in 1963 was in school.

> ...the first ever electrical sewing machine arrived in the school. I remember when it came and I did the kind of read… I feel like that the sewing machine was so new, that it had not been used by many, but I got to sew with it. (H3/II)

Memories associated with handicraft techniques of female interviewees were especially attached to knitting and crocheting but also sewing. Very often there were negative memories associated with knitting.

> But to me, not really anything but that knitting, have remained in my mind, it was so hard. (I-1/II)

Memories associated with school craft had also negative experiences about lessons and teachers.

> ...at the beginning, I was so afraid of the teacher...she was a senior teacher... she probably wasn't mean, but she of course was because she was old she was awfully grumpy.. that I remember that always when we worked there, we had to be really quiet, it wasn't allowed to speak in there…Then we were afraid even, that all the girls were always afraid, when we had to go and that was horrible… (I-5/II)

This data showed, that there were pleasant school craft associated memories, that instantiated a contradiction between teaching and pupil's need. Pupil's need and traditions within a specific place or school did not always met teacher's interests. For example, fishing gear were manufactured despite the fact that there were no need for them in the close by area.

> Boys at least always did those fishing gears, but we had no need for them here… fish net joint parts and other stuff.. Usually we did the kind of stuff that were needed… but teacher X thought then that there was a need to go fishing, but what, we haven't really had places where we could go for fishing here. (I-3/II)

It seems that there is a close connection between the school craft teaching and a strong feeling and experience on how one values oneself through handicraft products and practical work.

> Interviewer: What is... What has remained the best in your mind?
>
> I-1/I: It was that what I could do. I was awkward in school craft.
>
> I-1/II: ….. To me the curtains that I did in lower secondary remained the best in my mind. I don't remember weather I was an 8th grader. I was really proud of them. I could do stuff with a sewing machine, but knitting... no, I really could not. It was something awful, when we had to knit. But when you were allowed to make things with a sewing machine. I have sewed a college sweater and probably college trousers as well I'm not sure. A college sweater and then curtains. They turned out well. I found that most pleasant.

Conclusions and discussion

The participants interviewed for this research mainly represent already the industrialised era when, due to the change in livelihood structure, the focus of school craft shifted into untraditional skills needed in the industry and hobbies (figure 1). Not even the oldest interviewees spoke about girls' handicraft and boys' handicraft, and instead had adapted to use the terms textile work and technical work through their children and grandchildren (figure 2). In the recollection talk, the name of handicraft seems to be associated with material areas instead of gender, even though the division into teaching groups of content areas within school craft had been done based on gender. (e. g. Lindfors, 2012). The name change of the subject, that happened along with Curriculum 1970 (Committee report, 1970), was integrated into interviewees use.

This research material was quite large even there were only fifteen interviewees and five group interviews. One fifth of the participants were male (n=3). For this reason the research material did not give a balanced image about both genders' craft memories. It does not give a possibility to do comparisons between men's and women's memories that was neither the aim. It is difficult to make wide general conclusions on craft memories based on interviews. However the research material has the voice of five families with three generations, the thing that makes the research material and also the result exceptional.

This qualitative data showed the monolithic shades of memories. The duration, tone and nature of the interviews varied a lot. Self-made handicraft products does not seem to be removed from the memory as easily as objects purchased from a store. It was notable that interviewees mentioned frequently products which they have preserved over decades. According to Kokko (2007, p. 39) the meanings given to an object by an object are related, inter alia, to the moment of repetition and the situation. One main reason preserving school crafts is that they keep memories. The work phases and manufacturing techniques will be remembered in detail over the years. The preserved self-made pieces of school craft remind one of the moods, successes and failures associated with their manufacturing, the joy and the pain of making. (Kokko 2007, pp. 38-39.) In this research material knitted products appeared to have remained products that pupils make in school craft lessons from decade to another. Also scoops for throwing water on the sauna stove were manufactured by many participants. In addition, different sweaters were mentioned by girls. College sweaters and -hoodies may have slightly replaced blouses and they are mentioned by both sexes within the youngest generation. Based on the results, it seems that a concrete product that has been used has an effect on memory traces. According to earlier research the product plays a fundamental role in pupils' approach to learning handicraft (Autio et al., 2011).

On the basis of this research material the products which were remembered were somehow personal. The product or its making made it worth to remember. The product had also often either a negative or positive emotional memory which helped its remembering. Koskijoki (1997a; 1997b) states that the relationship to a handmade item is quite often more personal than a relationship with a serial production item. This research list of manufactured products (Table 2) shows also that there are considerable differences in the number of memories. The oldest generation did not have so many school craft product memories such as later generations. Apart from the fact that the memories have been forgotten, in the light of the curriculum, it is assumed that there were not so many products in the school in the past decades.

Heikkinen (1997, p. 49) states in her research that school craft has remained almost unchanged for decades. In her research, the interviewees not really questioned the necessity and reasonableness of taught techniques and manufactured handicraft products. Based on this research, for almost 20 years later collected data, it was rather about the quality and difficulty level that was discussed between generations. In group discussions, these different structures between generations met. Generation discussions entailed a lot of comparing similarities and differences between experiences – depending on the nature and possibilities of the group discussion. The oldest memories were associated with missing handicraft materials. During war times pupils brought handicraft materials, threads and fabrics, to school by themselves. Materials were also manufactured at home to be used at school.

> Well then there were so awfully few fabrics for pupils that they didn't give a proper fabric to me either…but we had the kind of wheat-flour-bag at home, which was dismantled. I got from that then. (I-3/I)

Some of the products were associated with technologies that were only used during a certain curriculum, for example a pen dryer was only mentioned in the memories of participants born in 1930's, whereas a scoop for throwing water on the sauna stove and woollen socks as well as knitted mittens were in the memories of pupils through many curricula. Increase in the freedom of choice was visible in the memories of the youngest generation. According to the participants' recollection talk, the products manufactured in school craft lessons became multiplied and smaller over the years. Especially material areas of products expanded while their production time shortened. Products followed the societal technological change in their manufacturing techniques. Based on the results, it can also be concluded that the aim of trying to reduce the dichotomy between boys' and girls' handicrafts that started in 1970 curriculum (Committee Report, 1970) is applied in practice slowly. In the memories of the youngest generation, there are evidently products from both textile- and technical area of school craft (Figure 2). Naturally this should be a consequence of the changes of curricula and it shows that schools are following the curriculum. However, the interviewees hardly remembered products that would combine soft and hard materials according to the purpose of use of the product that is one aim of the newest curriculum (NCCBE, 2014).

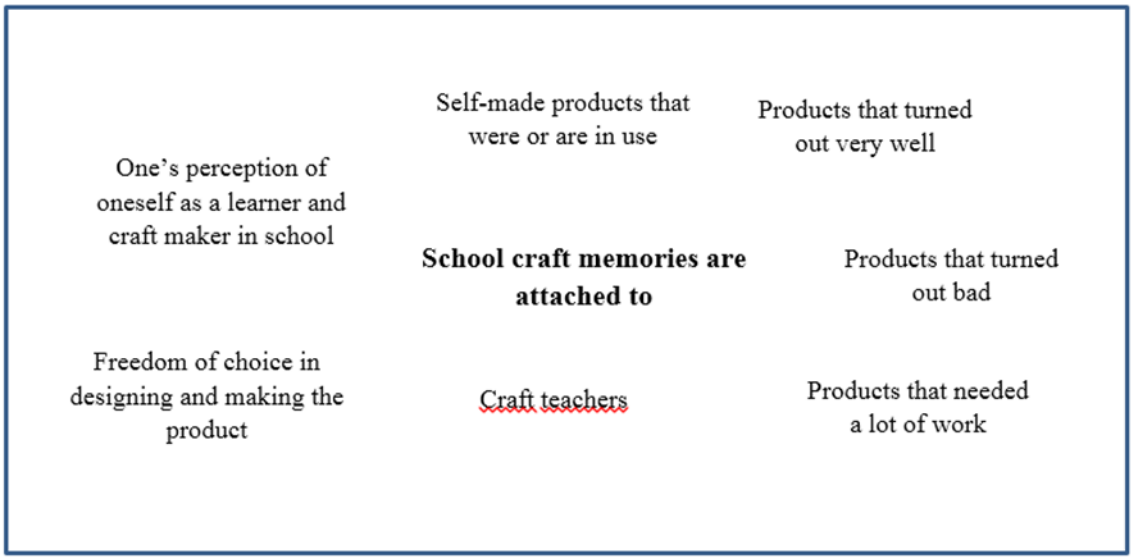

Figure 3. The factors attached to school craft memories.

There seem to be some shared factors related to school craft that make interviewees attaching to this either pleasant or unpleasant experiences (Figure 3). There is no observable common line in the techniques used in handicraft products that the participants would have experienced most pleasant in their memories. A common factor seems to be that the listed products have been in use either with the interviewees or their family. Also the products that needed a lot of work or turned out very well or bad were remembered well. Surprisingly many interviewee determined their hand skills based on their learning experiences, and memories of their own skilfulness followed them even for decades. Based on memories, it is difficult to change especially negative impressions of one's own skilfulness – even though one would gain age and life experiences. The results of this study imply that one's perception of oneself as a learner – in this case as handicraft maker – remains especially well, particularly if the experiences have been negative. These factors are very important to be considered by craft teachers at the current school. This might help them to understand pupils' experiences within school craft. It might also help teachers to understand the factors that are related to pupils' motivation in craft subject to be able to support individual pupils in heterogeneous learning groups.

When the curriculum changes, the change of the subject can be seen in school craft memories like revealed in this study. Cygnaeus emphasised (1910) the active role of a pupil in making handicraft and learning through work. This is a modern view even these days and puts experience based aspects of the craft subject and pupils' authentic problem solving needs as a basis of a learning experience. The most recent basic education curriculum of comprehensive school (NCCBE, 2014) emphasises the multimaterial school craft, and it does not have a list describing techniques to be used or products to be made. The change that the current curriculum (NCCBE, 2014) demands from the school craft as a subject is of a similar magnitude as introducing school craft to elementary school - which guided action based and experiential learning as becoming a fundamental principle of general education. For further research, it would be interesting to see how the big change in school craft teaching into a multimaterial handicraft will be seen in pupils' memories after several years' time. It remains to be seen what kind of memory knowledge the pupils of the present time produce on the basis of their own learning experiences – and what it tells about the changes in teaching and experiencing the craft subject. Over the years, the curricula (Committee Report, 1970; NCCBE, 1985; 1994; 2004; 2014) have tried to meet the requirements of societal transformation and emphasized creative problem solving as a part of learning a holistic craft process.

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